

# SUMTER COUNTY

**Honorable T.J. Montgomery**

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## PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Persuading Children to Remain Drug Free
2. Eliminating Child Abuse & Neglect
3. Creating a Family Resource Center

# Issues

*Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.*

## **Health - Children's (0 - 19)** physical and mental well-being in the county.

### **Reducing the Rate of Births to Unmarried Teens**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Maintain CTF grant to combat child abuse and neglect
- Align with position of health department to promote abstinence
- Offer parenting class and clothing to mothers

### **Access to Mental Health Care**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Encourage mental health department to offer services for minors
- Seek services of mental health personnel for Court cases
- Encourage mental health department to provide in home services to minors

### **Persuading Children to Remain Drug Free**

Policy Council Actions Steps:

- Maintain drug deterrence program
- Align with Board of Education program to encourage remaining drug free
- Distribute anti-drug literature to schools

## **Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.**

### **Remain Drug Free**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Continue Mock Trial: Guns & Drugs Are Out
- Continue networking with law enforcement
- Maintain Poster Contest promoting anti-drug message

### **Eliminating Child Abuse & Neglect**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Seek renewal of grant to maintain parenting class
- Continue networking with extension service to secure parenting course instructors
- Maintain food bank & clothes closet for county residents

### **Discouraging Children from Handling Firearms**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Educate minors regarding hazards associated with handguns during Mock Trial
- Distribute gun safety locks
- Distributing booklets which discourage children from handling guns

## **Education - Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.**

### **Striving to Provide Quality Education**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Promote early awareness intervention by schools and district attorney's office
- Collaborate with school board in pursuit of grants
- Form partnership with neighboring universities to provide services to students

### **Making the School Environment Safe**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Student member of CPC wrote article regarding existing security measures within the schools
- Collaborate with school system
- Collaborate with truancy officers, district attorney and principals

### **Securing School Funds**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Support letters provided to Board of Education
- Collaborate with efforts of schools to secure funds and/or resources
- Provide computers to elementary schools

## Early Care and

**Education** - Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

### Focusing on Preschool Students

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Creation of family resource center
- Providing volunteers to read at Head Start
- Partnership with Foster Parent Association

### Meeting the Needs of the Young

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Support pre-school and Head Start by providing clothing to students
- Foster literacy by CPC Board Members donating books to pre-school program
- Providing support to pre-school staff

### Providing the Basics to First Graders School Readiness

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide school uniforms to needy families
- Provide school supplies to 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes
- Seeking computers to supply to schools

## Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

### Getting the Unemployed into the Workforce

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide clothing for "new hires"
- Providing a monthly food allotment
- Promoting positive self-esteem

### Instilling a Positive Work Ethics

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide scholarships to several categories of high school graduates that enter college
- Provide employment on newsletter staff
- Seek volunteers to mentor minors during work situations

### Creating a Family Resource Center

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Seek funding from Black Belt Foundation in support of our family resource center
- Secured Vista Grant
- Collaborated with local cooperatives to gain services

## Parent Involvement and Skills

- Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

### Teaching Good Parenting Skills

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Seek parenting skills grant
- Reward parenting course graduates
- Distribute booklet within county to inform citizens of services available to needy families

### Educating Citizens about Child Support

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Developing pamphlet that highlights services available to child support clients
- Form network with DHR and law enforcement to provide services to clients
- Inviting classes to child support

### Helping the Single Parent to Survive

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Educating parents about services available to them
- Providing school uniforms to needy families
- Offering food through food bank

## Policy Recommendation

1. Dedicate funding resources to individual counties that are developing a family resource center.
2. Require a mental health professional to be available to minors in each county.
3. Promote awareness of problems associated with child abuse and neglect through the media: psa, newspaper.
4. Reinstitute the Nurse-Family Partnership Program.
5. Fund a summer jobs program.
6. Provide a grant writer.
7. Provide job training through state program such as Easter Seals job coach.

## Accomplishments

1. Beginning April 2005, COTV began extensive excavation on 6 ½ acres that were donated by Georgia Pacific Foundation to our Children's Policy Council for development of a family resource center. Community partners have donated hours of service to the creation of our family resource center.
  - a. Alabama Federation of Southern Cooperative- performed water and soil testing and designed a plan for the best use of the property. (30 hours)
  - b. Sumter County Water Authority- performed repairs to plumbing (25 hours).
  - c. Survey Electrical System on grounds- by a licensed electrician (20 hours).
  - d. Bellsouth-install telephone lines with a reduced rate (2 hours).
  - e. Orkin Termite- 30% reduction of fees to provide termite bond.
  - f. Carpet Installation- estimate for carpet installation
  - g. Black Warrior Equipment- donated hours needed for excavation (50 hours).
  - h. University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa- formed partnership to develop entrepreneurial model for production of newsletter (50 hours).